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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

Intelligence Community Staff

IC 75-2590

20 NOV 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, NSCIC Working Group

SUBJECT: DoD Evaluation of NIAM 35/36-2-75, "Arab-Israeli Hostilities," 13 June 1975

1. The 3 November memorandum to Working Group members from the Executive Secretary on this subject solicits comments from members on this particular evaluation and recommendations on how to make such papers more useful.

2. I consider this paper on the whole a very positive contribution. The amount of effort reflected in its preparation indicates a serious approach toward improving the intelligence product. I have made it available to the appropriate NIO, and intend to do the same with future appraisals of this kind.

3. It would be unreasonable, in my view, to expect consumers (or their staffs) to produce detailed reactions to every non-serial intelligence publication issued by the Community, or even to every NIE, SNIE, or NIAM. Rather, such sustained efforts as this one probably should be reserved for the most important estimates, such as NIE 11-3/8 ("Soviet Capabilities for Intercontinental Conflict Through the Mid-80s") and NIE 11-5 ("Soviet Assessment of the US"). Something less comprehensive would do quite well for the other papers.

4. I have two reservations regarding the evaluation. First, DoD may be asking the Community to quantify the intangible. Many important aspects of intelligence problems are not susceptible to quantification, but require "judgmental" analysis, which after all involves the use of what the Concise Oxford Dictionary terms the "critical faculty, discernment, and good sense." Of course, high-level consumers have a right to expect producers to be forthcoming about what they know and don't know. I have some doubt (though I am willing to be convinced otherwise) that they expect this candor to be reflected in lengthy essays on analytical methodology in a substantive intelligence document.

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5. Secondly, there may be some confusion between basic intelligence and estimative intelligence. The former, as applied to the Arab-Israeli balance, involves the detailing of order of battle, weapons characteristics and the like, and is dealt with in the Arab-Israeli Handbook. The Handbook is a primer and a reference work. The latter type of intelligence, on the other hand, addresses the dynamics of the situation, about which policymakers have to make decisions. That, indeed, is why NIEs, SNIEs, and NIAMs (such as NIAM 35/36-2-75) are written.

6. I have been assured by the NIO for the Middle East of his willingness to discuss particular portions of the DoD evaluation with the appropriate staff officers at their convenience.

/s/

Samuel V. Wilson
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy to the DCI for the
Intelligence Community

cc: NIO/ME

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